corresponding period last year. During the period April-November 2002 Export of Basmati Rice to U.S. has increase both in quantitative and value terms as compared to corresponding period last year.

India remains that largest exporter of Basmati Rice to the USA. The slight decline in export of Basmati rice during the period April-October 2002 is due to overall decline of import of Basmati rice in U.S. The Government is not aware of any restrictions imposed by the U.S. Government on imports of Basmati rice from India or of any preference to other countires, including Pakistan.

Progress in WTO negotiations

486. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in WTO negotiations following the launching of Doha round;

(b) whether there has been retrogression in implementing the Doha declaration regarding issues of public health and their compatibility with the TRIPS agreement; and

(c) the assessment of Government regarding the likely improvement in the market access for the agricultural export?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) In accordance with the mandate provided in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, negotiations on various issues included in the Doha Work Programme are taking place in the relevant WTO negotiating/regular bodies. In respect of most of the issues covered by the Doha Work Programme the progress has been uneven. Inparticular, the deadlines given by the Ministers on three issues of importance to the developing countries, namely, TRIPS and Public Health; Special and Differential Treatment; and the Implementation-related issues and concerns could not be adhered to. India and other developing countries have strongly voiced their concerns in the WTO on the slow progress of the negotiations in these areas.

(b) In paragraph 6 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration relating to the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, the Ministers had directed the TRIPS Council to find an expeditious solution by December, 2002 to the problem of countries with insufficient or no manufacturing capacities in the pharmaceutical sector in making effective use of flexibility of compulsory license. Paragraph 1 of the Declaration recognized the gravity of the public health problems afflicting many developing and least-developed countries, especially those resulting from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other epidemics.

Based on the various proposals submitted by the developing countries including India, the Africa Group, and developed countries such as the United States and the European Communities, negotiations have been taking place in the TRIPS Council.The Chairman of the TRIPS Council gave a proposal for a Draft Waiver Decision under paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration under reference. The TRIPS Council could not arrive at a consensus on this issue as the United States did not agree to the Chairman's proposal. In view of this, these negotiations did not lead to any positive results by the deadline of 31 December, 2002. However, the Chairman of the TRIPS Council is continuing with his consultations with a view to finding a solution.

(c) In accordance with the mandate for negotiations on agriculture and the deadlines established therein, following detailed discussions on all aspects of the negotiations, the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Special Session, presented on overview on the negotiations in mid-December 2002, followed by the first draft modalities for negotiations in mid-February 2003. While there is convergence in some areas of negotiations on agriculture, gaps in positions between Members remain on many key areas of the negotiations. In accordance with the Doha mandate, the modalities for negotiations are required to be established by 31 March, 2003, and negotiations concluded by 1 January, 2005.

Improvements in market access for our agricultural exports will depend upon the agreement reached by Members in the on-going negotiations to reduce distortions in World agricultural markets resulting from high levels of support and protection provided by India's major trading partners, and

the extent to which the opportunities for trade in agricultural products that are created will be actualized by our trading entities. This would also depend on the results achieved in other areas of Doha Work Programme since the final results of negotiations in all areas would be part of the single undertaking of the Members.

Review of anti-dumping duties on sensitive products imported from Nepal

487. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have agreed to review speical, additional and anti-dumping duties imposed on several sensitive products imported from Nepal;

(b) if so, whether any concrete agreements in this regard has been reached between the two countries;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken on implement them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) to (d) Directorate General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties has so far initiated two anti-dumping cases involving Nepal. The case on Zinc Oxide was initiated on 19.3.2001 and the anti-dumping duty is in place since 12.9.2001. In the case of Acrylic Yarn, investigations were initiated on 3.7.2001 and the anti-dumping duty is in place since 10.10.2001. However, the Central Government later issued orders exempting the permitted fixed quantity of Zinc Oxide (2500 MT per annum) and Acrylic Yarn (10000 MT per annum) modifying the earlier orders in view of review and modifications in the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Trade.